

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY NEA:HNSAUNDERS:HE

APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

S/AA - AMB. ATHERTON

HA - MS. DERIAN

S/S-O RCASTRODALE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 145827

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, PINS

SUBJECT: TREATMENT OF PRISONERS

1. FOLLOWING SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH DINITZ ON JUNE 6, SECRETARY ASKED SAUNDERS TO CALL BAR-ON AND TAKE UP ONE ISSUE WHICH SECRETARY HAD MEANT TO MENTION.

2. EARLY EVENING JUNE 6, SAUNDERS CALLED BAR-ON TO SAY THAT U.S. IS CONCERNED OVER RECURRING REPORTS WHICH IT HAS RECEIVED OF ARAB PRISONERS BEING SEVERELY MISTREATED DURING INTERROGATIONS IN WEST BANK AND GAZA. INFORMATION WE HAVE RECEIVED IS MORE THAN HEARSAY, AND WE HAVE TAKEN THEM SERIOUSLY. WHILE THIS INFORMATION WILL REMAIN CLASSIFIED IN OUR HANDS, WE HAVE TO ASSUME THAT SUCH REPORTS WILL BECOME PUBLIC SINCE THERE IS SO MUCH INTEREST
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IN THIS GENERAL SUBJECT. THEREFORE, WE WANTED TO RAISE QUESTION OF TREATMENT OF PRISONERS AGAIN WITH GOI.

3. SAUNDERS FURTHER NOTED THAT IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE MISTREATMENT OCCURS BEFORE ACCESS TO PRISONERS IS GRANTED TO ICRC. ONE WAY TO PROVIDE SOME BRAKE TO FURTHER PROBLEMS AND TO IMPROVE ISRAEL'S POSTURE IN THE FACE OF

ANY FURTHER PUBLICITY WOULD BE TO PERMIT ICRC ACCESS TO
DETAINEES IMMEDIATELY AFTER THEIR DETENTION RATHER THAN

WAITING FOR 14 DAYS TO ELAPSE SINCE IT IS DURING THAT
PERIOD WHEN MOST REPORTS ALLEGE THAT MISTREATMENT
TAKES PLACE.

4. SAUNDERS CONCLUDED BY SAYING HE HOPED THAT, BY
BRINGING THIS NEW ROUND OF REPORTS TO GOI'S ATTENTION,
WE WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVING THE SITUATION.

5. BAR-ON PROMISED TO PASS THIS APPROACH BACK TO
JERUSALEM AND MADE TWO COMMENTS. FIRST, HE NOTED THAT
ICRC ACCESS TO PRISONERS IS OFTEN GRANTED BEFORE 14 DAYS
HAVE ELAPSED SINCE THAT PERIOD IS INTENDED TO DESCRIBE
THE MAXIMUM. SECOND HE SAID IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF
WE COULD PROVIDE DETAILS ON SPECIFIC CASES SO THAT GOI
COULD INVESTIGATE. SINCE IT WAS ALREADY LATE IN THE
EVENING, SAUNDERS AGREED THAT THEY WOULD HAVE ANOTHER
DISCUSSION ON THIS SUBJECT AFTER WE HAD CONSULTED
FURTHER AMONG OURSELVES ON RESPONSE TO BAR-ON'S POINTS.

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